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DISSERTATION  
UPON  
PAMPHLETS.

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In a LETTER to a Nobleman.

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*by Mr. Oldys*  
*K*



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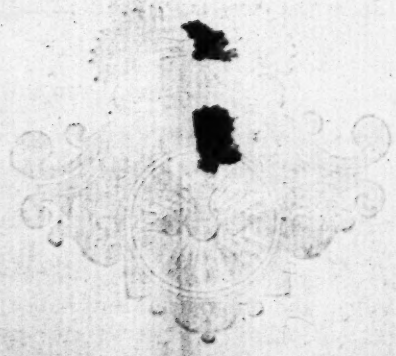
L O N D O N:

Printed in the YEAR M,DCC,XXXI

PAMPHLET

PAMPHLET

In a LETTER to a Nobleman



Printed in the Year MDCXXI

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A  
DISSERTATION  
UPON  
PAMPHLETS,  
And the UNDERTAKING of  
PHOENIX BRITANNICUS,  
To Revive the most EXCELLENT among Them.

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IN a LETTER to a NOBLEMAN : From the Original M. S.

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My LORD,

THE Inclination you have expressed, to hear what might be said, in Behalf of those most numerous Productions of our Press, which we distinguish by the Name of PAMPHLETS; and the present *Undertaking*, by the Compiler of *PHOENIX BRITANNICUS*, to Revive the most Excellent among them; has induced me thus briefly, to touch upon those Particulars which seemed most to attract your *Lordship's* Inquiry; hoping the Readiness of my Endeavour will atone for the Imperfections of my Performance; which, if it does not equal the Extensions of your Curiosity, may add to the Instances of your Candour: So that, where you find not Entertainment commensurate to your *Knowledge*, you will not fail of Exercise correspondent to your *Goodness*.

And, First, for the *Derivation* of the Word *Pamphlet*: I should think it little discredited by what some *Etymologists*, and those who torture Words into Confessions of what they were never guilty, have, thro' the Confinement of themselves to some opprobrious Signification, censoriously suggested thereof. Thus one Linguist, having found a Word which will illustrate the Adaptness of these Writings to the vulgar Consultation of the Populace, would derive it from Πᾶν and Πᾶσι, as *filling all Places*, which all vulgar and popular Things have the Property of doing\*. Another Original, no less specious, has been offered me, by an ingenious Friend, from Πᾶν and Φλέγω, which, by a Grammatical Turn, reaches to the Analogy of *Sound*, and, by a Rhetorical Twist, to the plausible Sense of *inflaming all Parties*. But others, considering the Subject of *Pamphlets* in a more copious and unbiassed Latitude, as having branched into all other Parts of Science, besides *Religion* and *Politics*, from the first Appropriation of the Name, and before their Engagement in Controversy could draw upon them any prevailing *Sobriquet* to their Disparagement, have, with less Partiality, concluded of these Tracts, whose Contents, therefore, as well as *Dimensions*,

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\* Minshew's *Guide to Tongues*, Fol. 1627.



mentions, are so generally engaging to all Writers and Readers, so much more universally suited to every Body's Perusal, to every Body's Purchase, that the Name is more properly derivable from Πᾶν and οἰέω, as if they were a Kind of Composition, *beloved by*, or *delighting all People*\*. But, notwithstanding this favourable Derivation, I should not be for going to *Athens* after one, or seeking it in any other of the more ancient Languages, seeing *that* Word *Pampier*, for *Paper*, in one more Modern, more probable to me (as it seemed before, to one of our most industrious *Glossographers*) for *this* of *Pamphlet*, to be derived from ‡; the last Letter of the first Syllable being interwoven by *Epenthesis*, to mollify the Sound; and the last Syllable substituted, as a noted Term of Diminution in many Languages||; with the same Difference of Interpretation, as between *Charta* and *Chartula*, or *Papyrus* and *Papyrusculus*: Thus, also, in *French*, the Diminutive of the Word *Livre*, for a Book itself, is *Livret*; and thus, in *English*, we have *Aglet*, *Amulet*, *Bracelet*, *Chaplet*, *Corset*, *Eaglet*, *Gaffet*, *Hamlet*, *Howlet*, *Oilet*, *Pallet*, *Pullet*, *Ringlet*, *Rivulet*, and Twenty more, with like Terminations to the same Sense. Now, this Extraction, besides the Plea of Precedent, has the farther Recommendations to our Preference, of not antedating the Familiarity of *Gracism* in our Tongue, and withal of deriving itself from the more apparent, and determinable Quality, of the Size or Substance, rather than the Subject Matter, of these more exiguous Compositions. And thus the Word *Pamphlet*, or *little Paper Book*, imports no reproachful Character, any more than the Word *Great Book*; signifies a *Pasquil*, as little as it does a *Panegyric*, of itself: Is neither Good nor Bad, Learned nor Illiterate, True nor False, Serious nor Jocular, of its own naked Meaning, or Construction; but is either of them, according as the Subject makes the Distinction. Thus, of scurrilous and abusive *Pamphlets*, to be burned in 1647, we read in *Rushworth*; and, by the Name of *Pamphlet*, is the *Encomium* of Queen *Emma* called in *Hollinshead*.

As for the *Antiquity of Pamphlets*, it is not only questionable, whether the Art of *Printing* should set a Bound to it, but even the very Adoption of the Name itself; which yet I take to be more Modern than that Art: For I look upon them as the eldest Offspring of Paper, and to claim the Rights of *Primogeniture* even of Bound Volumes, however they may be shorter-liv'd, and the Younger Brother has so much out-grown the Elder; in-as-much as Arguments do now, and more especially did, in the Minority of our Erudition, not only so much more rarely require a larger Compass than Pamphlets will comprise; but these being of a more ready and facil, more decent and simple Form, suitable to the Character of the more Artless Ages, they seem to have been preferred by our modest Ancestry for the Communication of their Sentiments, before Book-Writing became a *Trade*; and Lucre, or Vanity let in Deluges of Digressory Learning, to swell up unwieldy *Folio's*. Thus I find, not a little to the Honour of our Subject, no less a Person than the Renowned King *ÆLFRED*, collecting his Sage Precepts, and Divine Sentences, with his own Royal Hand, into *Quaternions of Leaves stitched together*\*\* ; which he would enlarge with additional *Quaternions*, as Occasion offered; yet seemed he to keep his Collection so much within the Limits of a *Pamphlet-Size* (however bound together at last) that he called it by the Name of his *Hand-Book*, because he made it his constant Companion, and had it at Hand wherever he was.

It is so difficult to recover even any of our first Books, or *Volumes*, which were Printed by *William Caxton*, though it is certain he set forth near Half a Hundred of them in *Folio*, that it were a Wonder if his *Pamphlets* should not be quite lost. There

\* Icon Libellorum in Pref. ‡ Skinneri Etymologicon Ling. Ang. Fol. 1671.

|| lb. in Voc. Let. & Sir Hen. Spelman's Gloss. \*\* Sir John Spelman's Life of Ælfred the Great, p. 205.



There are more extant of his Successor *Wynkin de Worde's* Printing in this lesser Form, whereof, as great Rarities, I have seen both in *Quarto* and *Octavo*, tho' holding no Comparison, probably, with those of his also, which are destroyed. But it was the Irruption of the Grand Controversy between the Church of *Rome*, and the first Opposers thereof, which seems to have laid the great Foundation of this Kind of Writing, and to have given great Credit to it at the same Time, as well by the many eminent Authors it produced in *Church and State*, as the successful Detection and Defeat, thereby befalling those religious Impostures, which had so universally inflaved the Minds of Men. Nay, this important Reformation, has been much ascribed to one little Pamphlet only, which a certain Lawyer of *Grey's-Inn*, obliged to fly into *Germany* (for having acted in a *Play* which incensed Cardinal *Wolsey*) composed there, and conveyed by Means of the Lady *Anne Bullen*, to the Perusal of King *Henry*, at the Beginning of the said Rupture\*, and how the Copies thereof were strewed about, at the King's Procession to *Westminster* (the first Example, as some think, of that Kind of Appeal to the Public) how the Cardinal was nettled thereat; how he endeavoured to stifle and secrete the same; how it provoked the Pen of the bigotted Lord Chancellor; how, glaringly it was fix'd in the very Front of prohibited Books; and, yet, how it captivated the said King's Esteem and Affection: may be not only presumed from the Purport, but gathered from the Accounts which our *Ecclesiastical* Historians have given thereof|||. It would be endless to specify, how much this Province was thence-forward cultivated by *Prelates*, *Statesmen*, and *Authors* of the first Rank, not excepting *Majesty* itself, in the several Examples, which might be produced of the said King *Henry VIII.* King *James*, and King *Charles*. And, not to mention others of our Princes, less noted, though not less truly Authors in this Class, the middlemost of those here named, thought so honourably of these Pamphlet-Performances, that he deemed one of his own Writing so much above all Human Patronage, as to make a formal Dedication, or Inscription thereof, as I remember, to JESUS CHRIST himself\*\*: Yet are many of the said Labours of those ROYAL PAMPHLETEERS, and others, by some of the most renowned Scholars among us, no less equally difficult to retrieve, with the meanest and most illiterate whatever. Had *Phoenix Britannicus* been alive a *Century* past, or half a one sooner, we might have had a better *Knowledge* of that vast Number of Pamphlets, which *Montaigne* mentions §, and whereof he intimates many to have been so ingeniously written, on the aforesaid Controversy of the *Reformation*, than it is now possible we shall ever arrive at even the *Names* of.

But, as *England*, thro' its Spirit of Liberty, has been the most fruitful Country, for the Production of Pamphlets, so the Period which has been most fruitful in them, was that of our *Civil Wars*, in the Reign of King *Charles* the First. And, indeed, in all Disorders, or Commotions, it is natural to have Recourse to the most expeditious Intelligence and Redress, lest the Delay should be more dangerous than the Deficiency of them; or they, superannuated before they are born. For, while some Persons are labouring in the *Paroxysms* of Contention, were others to be pondering long-winded Expedients of Accommodation, and prescribe a Volume for a *Recipe*, the Dose would come too late for the Disease, and the very Preparation thereof disable its Efficacy. Therefore are Pamphlets, and such short Tracts, risest in great Revolutions; which tho' looked upon, by some, but as *Paper Lanterns*, set a flying to be gaped at by the Multitude (in illuminating whom, they have not always escaped the Flames themselves) yet are they beheld, by politic, or penetrating Eyes,

as

\* *Simon Fish's Supplication of Beggars*, 12<sup>o</sup>. 1524.  
*Supplication of Souls*.

||| See *Fox's Martyr*. Burnet's *Reformat.* Vol. 1.  
 \*\* *K. James against Conr. Vorstius*, 4to. 1611.

§ *Essaye sur la Defense de Senèque, et de Plutarque*.

|| *Sir Tho. More's*

as the *Thermometers* of State, fore-shewing the Temperature and Changes of Government, with the *Calentures* approaching therein, and even Preservatives to be had against them, would the *Active* be as unanimous to prevent, as the *Speculative* have been industrious to prognosticate the same. Tho' there may not remain as eminent Proofs among the Pamphleteers in the aforesaid *Anarchy*, of an Ambition to Unanimity, as there are to Dissention: For, surely, no Nation, has ever given more conspicuous Instances, to what immeasurable Lengths, Animosity, and Indignation will advance, upon the least Imposition, or even Umbrage of Tyrannical or Arbitrary Power; as might be exemplified, among many others, in the restless *John Lilburn*, and the endless *William Prynne*, who had both been bleeding Witnesses thereof. There are near a Hundred Pamphlets, written by, and concerning the *first* of these Authors: But the Labours of the *last* being unparallel'd, I may here not improperly observe, that during the *Forty-two* Years he was a Writer, he published above a *Hundred and Sixty* Pamphlets, besides several thick Bound Volumes in *Quarto* and *Folio*, all said to be gathered into about *Forty* Tomes, and extant in *Lincoln's-Inn* Library. I think the printed Catalogue of his Writings, extends not their whole Number beyond *One Hundred Sixty-eight* different Pieces: But *Anthony Wood* to above *One Hundred and Fourscore*; who also computes, he must needs have composed at the Rate of a Sheet every Day, from the Time that he came to Man's Estate\*. That Author's Character of him is drawn from his avowed Enemies, even *Papists*, as *Cressy*, or Personal Antagonists, as *Heylin*, &c. — But I cannot well omit what one sprightly Pamphleteer intimates, among other Things, of him, to this Purpose; "That *Nature* makes ever the dullest Beasts most laborious, and the greatest Feeders: *That* though he had read and swallowed much, yet, for want of Rumination, he concocted little: *That* to return Things unaltered, was a Symptom of a feeble Stomach; and, as an Error in the first Concoction, derives itself to the others, and nourishing up a prevalescent Humour, begets, at last, a Disease; even so, his Judgment, being once depraved, turned all his Reading into bilious or putrid Humours, which being perpetually increased, by his insatiate Gluttony of Books, did miserably foment and heighten his Malady of Writing" ||. Another of his Draughtsmen has, among other humorous Touches, as follows:--- "This is the *William*, whose Passion is the *Conqueror*.---The *Error* of whose Judgment, and unpardonable *Instability*, is to be imputed to the Loss of his two *Biaffes*; for, if a *Bowl's* Deviation from the *Jack*, is occasioned hereby, much more a Rational Creature's, *à fortiori*" ‡. Neither will I omit what the Translator of the Ingenious Father *Bartoli's* *Huomo di Lettere* says in his Praise, where he calls him, "*Pater Patriæ*"; for giving us a *Dædalian* Clue in the blackest Night of Tyranny: farther adding; "Your numerous and nervous, large and learned Volumes (which who can reckon?) have been so successful in the Refutation of Errors, Reformation of Vice, Regulation of Disorders, Restauration of Parliaments and Laws, that I must, in Justice, join you with the Renowned General MONK, as the two *worthiest* Subjects of all *Honour*: For, if his *Generosity* speaks him *Herculem Anglorum*, your *Erudition* proclaims you *Alcidem Litterarum*, &c" \*\*.

This particular Notice of our most voluminous Pamphleteer, will lead us to a general Review of the numerous Produce of the Press, during that turbulent Series aforesaid, wherein he was such a fruitful Instrument, to impregnate the same, and promote the licentious Superfætation thereof. For, by the grand Collection of Pamphlets, which was made by *Tomlinson* the Bookseller ‡, from the Latter-end of the Year

\* *Athen. Oxon.* Vol. 2.

|| *A serious Epist. to Mr. W. Prynne*, 4to. 1649,

p. 4. ‡ *The Character, or Ear-Mark of Mr. W. Prynne*, 4to. 1659. p. 3.

\*\* *The Learned Man defended and reformed.* Transl. by T. Salusbury, 8vo, 1660, in *Epist. to W. Prynne, Esq.* ‡ *Memoirs for the Curious*, 4to, 1708. Vol. 2 p. 176.



Year 1640, to the Beginning of 1660, it appears, there were published, in that Space, near *Thirty Thousand* several Tracts, and that these were not the compleat Issue of that Period, there is good Presumption, and, I believe, Proofs in Being: Notwithstanding, it is enriched with near a Hundred Manuscripts, which no Body then (being written on the Side of the *Royalists*) would venture to put in Print; the Whole, however, for it is yet undispersed, is progressionally and uniformly Bound, in upwards of *Two Thousand Volumes*, of all Sizes. The *Catalogue*, which was taken by *Marmaduke Foster*, the *Auctioneer*, consists of *Twelve Volumes in Folio*\*, wherein every Piece has such a punctual Register and Reference, that the smallest, even of a single Leaf, may be readily repaired to thereby. They were collected, no doubt, with great Assiduity and Expence, and not preserved, in those troublesome Times, without great Danger and Difficulty; the Books being often shifted from Place to Place, out of the Army's Reach. And so scarce were many of these Tracts, even at their first Publication, that King *Charles the First* is reported to have given Ten Pounds for only reading one of them over, which he could no where else procure, at the Owner's House, in *St. Paul's Church-Yard*†. And yet this *Collection*, will, perhaps, not now produce the Tenth, and, some think, not the Twentieth Part of the *Four Thousand Pounds* which he is said to have refused for it. Whatever is the Reason, that they may seem to be thus depreciated, I presume not to distinguish, perceiving so many Reasons offering themselves to our Choice for the same: As, Whether it lies not in the *Way* of the present Possessor, to make the best Use or Advantage of them: Whether abundance of extraneous Volumes, or more extended Treatises, published in that *Interstice*, upon Subjects foreign to a Collection of *Occasional Pamphlets*, Historical and Political, interfere not to make up the Number: Particularly, Whether it is not furcharged with the canting Divinity of *those* Times, which may be thought too crude, lean, and dull for the Edification of *these*: But more particularly, Whether those who would be Purchasers, having, doubtless, some Knowledge of Pamphlets, the Use which has been, and what remains to be made by Historical Writers, of them, do not apprehend, that so many copious Collectors, general and special, who were contemporary with that important Period, have already sufficiently gleaned, and displayed whatever is Material among these more compendious Assistances. For so it is evident, that Mr. *Rusworth*, the most voluminous of them all, did, most plentifully, supply himself from these Fountains, how abundantly soever he represents the Facts therein corrupted with Fiction: How fondly soever he seems to magnify his own Sagacity, in the distinguishment of one from the other; and how suspiciously soever he discourtenances all farther Examination into them, than that wherewith he has been pleased to present us; where he expresses himself thus slightly of these very Authorities, which have yet so liberally contributed to such of the massy *Tomes*, passing under his Name, whereof he was the real Compiler. "*Posterity* (says he) should know, " that some durst write the Truth, whilst other Men's Fancies were more busy than " their Hands; forging Relations; building, and battering Castles in the Air; publishing Speeches, as spoken in Parliament, which were never spoken there; printing " Declarations, which were never passed; relating Battels, which were never fought; " and Victories, which were never obtained; dispersing Letters, which were never writ " by the Authors; together with many such Contrivances, to abet a Party or Interest.---*Pudet hæc opprobria*. Such Practices, and the Experience I had thereof, and " the Impossibility for any Man, in After-Ages, to ground a True History, by relying on the printed *Pamphlets* of our Days, which passed the *Press*, while it was " without Controul, obliged me to all the Pains and Charge I have been at, for many " Years together, to make a great *Collection*; and, whilst Things were fresh in Me-

" mory,

\* *Memoirs for the Curious*, 4to, 1708. Vol. 2. p. 176. † Ib.



“ mory, to separate *Truth* from *Falshood*; Things *real*, from Things *fictionis*, or “ *imaginary*; whereof I shall not at all repent, if I may but prove an ordinary Instrument to undeceive those who come after us ‡.

Otherwise, excepting those more partial, and precipitous Products of this Kind, wherewith that Age was so much glutted, there never was a greater Esteem, or a better Market; never so many eager Searchers after, or extravagant Purchasers of scarce Pamphlets, than in these present Times, as might be made evident, either from the Sales of them in general; as that of *Tom Britton*, the celebrated *Small-coal-Man* of *Clarkenwell*, who, besides his *Chymical* and *Musical Collections*, had one of *Choice Pamphlets*, which, as I have heard, he sold to the late Lord *Somers*, for upwards of Five Hundred Pounds. And, more especially, that of Mr. *Anthony Collins*, the last Year, whose Library, consisting chiefly of *Pamphlets*, and those mostly *Controversial*, mostly *Modern*, yet is reported to have been sold, both Parts of it, for above *Eighteen Hundred Pounds*: Incouragement sufficient to make the Catalogues of other like *Auctions* as expressive, and distinct as these are. Or, whether we descend into Particulars, and consider the exorbitant Value set upon, and Profits which have been made out of some single Pieces: As the *Topographical* Pamphlets of *John Norden*, the *Surveyor*; which, before they were re-printed often sold for *Forty Shillings* a-piece. And some of *Bale's* Tracts; as that of *Anne Askew*: More especially, the *Examination* of Sir *John Oldcastle*, which I have known to sell for *Three Guineas*, though gleaned by *Fox* into his *Book of Martyrs*. The *Expedition* of the Duke of *Somerset* into *Scotland*, also, has been sold for *Four Guineas*, though totally inserted in *Holinshed*. These, and some other personal Narratives, I could Name, are as notorious as the Advancement of *Jordano Bruno's* little Book, called, *Spaccio della Bestia Trionfante*, to near *Thirty Pounds*, at the *Auction* of Mr. *Bernard's* Books, Serjeant-Surgeon to her late Majesty: Or of the uncastrated *Holinshed*, to near *Forty-five Pounds*, some Years after. Though, when the former came to be known in *English*, it would sometimes pass off for so many *Pence*; and the Deficiencies of the Latter, to be supplied out of Auditor *Jett's* Library, it would not always rise to so many *Shillings*, that is to say, above its ordinary Estimation. Plainly demonstrating, that unreasonable Value arose not from any rich Mines of Knowledge, which the scarce Part would communicate, from nothing intrinsically Curious, or Instructive in it; nor even any material Use to be made of it; but merely from the empty Property of its Singularity, and being, as the contending Purchasers fondly apprehended, no where else recoverable.

Several other Tracts, besides those before specified, I could mention, which the Retailers of them have prized at their Weight in Gold, and for which, more Pounds have been exacted, than, probably, they ever yielded Pence, at their first Publication. But I refrain being too Particular, lest I should, too inadvertently, give Handles for Extortion on one Side, or too distinctly expose this Dotage of Curiosity on the other; nevertheless, I may hereupon seasonably observe, and the rather, because I have had Your LORDSHIP's Noble Concurrence, that this *Caco-zealous* Curiosity it is; which has, of late, been deemed so obstructive to the Advancement of Knowledge, in a Set of reputed *Literati*, who make no more Use of the Books they are beset with in their Studies, than *Eunuchs*, of the Beauties which environ them in the *Scraglio*; yet can never rest till they have gathered themselves *Libraries* to doze in; like Children, who will not be quiet without *Lights* to sleep by. But those, who are thus diseased, would do well to consider, while they monopolize such Collections as would extensively benefit the Republic of Letters, and bury them in the narrow Circuit of their own private, and unconsequential Possession, only because they have

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great Fortunes which will impower them to do it, how detrimental they may be to industrious and ingenious Scholars, of *small* ones, who really want them for public and important Uses; while the mercenary Salesmen, making no Distinction, but a general Rule of Valuation, from the particular Payments of one prodigal Purchaser, is encouraged to part with nothing to any Body else, at the intrinsic, or moderate Value: Whereas, if there were no extravagant *Buyers* of Books, there would be no extortionate *Sellers* of them. And if due Use were allowed to be made of all that are useful, there would be no such shameful Scarcity among them. Such Collectors, would, therefore, do well, I say again, to consider, that *Curmudgeons* among *Books*, are as discoverable as those among *Bags*; and that they may lose more Honour and Credit, than gain Wisdom or Happiness, by the fruitless Amassment and Imprisonment of *either*.

The extraordinary Price of Pamphlets aforesaid, would naturally excite our more deliberate Enquiry into what has been most extraordinary in the Contents of them; but so multifarious are the Subjects they comprehend, that it cannot be expected I should even enumerate the same, in the narrow Limits of this *Epistolary Address*. What do most attract the Attention of Mankind, are those dreaded Scourges of Male-Administration, commonly, tho' perhaps, sometimes too indiscriminately, bearing the contumelious Denomination of *Libels*. It matters little whether it appears to me Reasonable, or not, that such Writings, as duly expose Villany, should themselves be held vile; or that some Persons, who have been unjustly Injurious, by any other Means, may not be justly injured by this: But it is obvious to all, who know the Disproportion of Riches and Power in the World, that there are Crimes not to be blasted, and Criminals not to be branded by any other Means. And, since the Lashes of *Reason*, will reach where those of *Justice* cannot; since *Truth* will project *Defamation* from the Actions of oppressive Rulers, as uncontrollably as the *Sun* does *Shadows* from *opaque Bodies*, the Redress of the Effect is to be sought for in the Cause: And we should apply the *Salve* to the *Minds* which received the Provocation, not *Emperic*-like, seek to stanch them, by *binding up* the *Weapons* which returned it. Nay, we read that the Emperor *Charles V.* King *Francis I.* of *France*, and even *Solyman*, the Great *Turk*, with *Barbarossa*, the Pyrate, and several other Potentates, all condescended to become Tributaries to the Satyric Muse of *Pietro Aretino*; whom, notwithstanding it is not very probable, they had any Way personally exasperated\*. Some, also, in our own Story, might be named, who have taken the like Methods to alluage the Effects of their discreditable Conduct: Among whom are not wanting those, who, having penuriously made their *Plaster* too scanty for the *Sore*, have rather multiplied, than subtracted from their own Disgrace, and industriously exposed their Folly, by the imperfect Concealment of their Vice. These had not the effectual Tenderness for their own Reputation, it seems, even of the *Turk* and *Barbarian*; not that exquisite Apprehension of this durable Discipline, which may visit the Sins of the Fathers upon their Children, unto the third and fourth Generation; as, not the Love, so neither the Fear of Men of Letters, which is noted in one of the wisest *Roman* Emperors, by the Historian of his Life; and by one of our own Authors, in these Words:

*He feared less a Hundred Lances, than  
To impetuous Charges of a single Pen. ‡* Well knowing, that;  
*Parva necat morsu spatiosum vipera Taurum.* Ov.

I shall leave it for others to discuss, whether this Sort of Writing is more inclinable to flourish, and take deeper Root, by the Ventilations of Resentment, or wither, and

\* *Naudæana & Patiniana*, 8vo, à Paris, 1701. in *Patin.* p. 66. † *Lampridius in Alexandro Severo*, c. 3. ‡ *Alley's Hist. of Hen.* 7. p. 85.



and dye away in the Shades of Disregard\*. But this we may observe, that some Charges are of such a convincing, such a clinging Nature, that they are found not only to strike all Apology, or Contradiction dumb, but to stick longer upon the Names of the Accused, than the Flesh upon their Bones. Thus, *Philip II*'s wicked Employment, treacherous Desertion, and barbarous Persecution of his Secretary *Antonio Perez*, upbraids him, out of that Author's *Librillo*, thro' all Europe, to this Day †. *Mary*, Queen of Scots, has not yet got clear of *Buchanan's Detection* ‡. *Robert*, Earl of Leiceſter, cannot shake off Father *Parsons's Green-coat* \*\*. *George*, Duke of *Buckingham*, will not ipſedily out-strip Dr. *Egliſham's Fore-runner of Revenge* §. Nor was *Oliver Cromwell* far from Killing himſelf, at the Pamphlet which argued it to be *no Murder* ||, leſt it ſhould perſuade others to think ſo, and he periſh by ignobler Hands than his own.

In this Manner did ſome take the Liberty of calling theſe Perſonages to Account for their Miſdeeds, even while they were living. And, with regard to that moſt memorable Uſurper, laſt mentioned, thus was a celebrated Writer of ours for immortalizing his Name after his Death. "When we fix any Infamy on deceased Perſons, it ſhould not be done out of any Hatred to the Dead, but out of Love and Charity to the Living; that the Curſes, which only remain in Mens Thoughts, and dare not come forth againſt Tyrants (becauſe they are Tyrants) while they are ſo, may, at laſt, be for ever ſettled, and engraven upon their Memory, to deter all others from the like Wickedneſs; which, elſe, in the Time of their fooliſh Proſperity, the Flattery of their own Hearts, and of other Mens Tongues, would not ſuffer them to perceive.—— The Miſchief of Tyranny is too great, even in the ſhorteſt Time that it can continue: It is endleſs, and ſupportable, if the Example be to Reign too.—— If it were poſſible, to cut Tyrants out of all Hiſtory, and to extinguiſh their very Names, I am of Opinion, that it ought to be done; but, ſince they have left behind them, too deep Wounds to be ever cloſed up without a Scar, at leaſt, let us ſet ſuch a Mark upon their Memory, that Men of the ſame wicked Inclinations, may be no leſs affrighted with their laſting Ignominy, than inticed by their momentary Glories" §§. How little ſoever theſe Sentiments may be thought to need any Corroboration, I flatter myſelf the following Reply of our late excellent Queen *Mary*, ought not here to be forgotten. When ſome of her Courtiers would have incenſed her againſt *Monſieur Jurien*, who, in his Answer to Father *Maimburg*, that he might the better juſtify the Reformation in Scotland, made a very black Representation of their Queen *Mary*: *Is it not a Shame*, ſaid one of the Company, *that this Man, without any Conſideration for your Royal Perſon, ſhould dare to throw ſuch infamous Calumnies upon a Queen from whom your Royal Highneſs is deſcended?* Not at all, replied this ingenuous Princeſs, for, *is it not enough that, by fulſom Praises, Kings be lulled aſleep all their Lives, but muſt Flattery accompany them to their Graves?* How ſhall then Princes fear the Judgment of Poſterity, if Hiſtorians were not allowed to ſpeak Truth after their Death.\*\*\* Thus

\* *Vi. Drummond's Apol. Let. to a Nobleman*, in *Hiſt. Scotl.* 8vo. 1682. p. 358.

† See the fatal Effects of Arb. Power, and dangerous Condition of Court-Favourites, being a Translation of *Perez* his own Relation, 8vo, 1715. Alſo, Dr. Mich. Geddes's Tracts; The Spaniſh Hiſtorians, &c. || 12<sup>o</sup>. 1572, &c. \*\* *Leiceſter's Com. Wealth*, in French; alſo in Engliſh, re-printed in 4to, & 12o, 1641. & in 8vo, 1706. § In Latin 4to, 1625. and Engliſh, about the ſame Time; re-printed, 1642. || Killing no Murder, by Will. Allen (alias Col. Titus) 4to, 1657, &c. §§ Cowley's Viſion, concern. his late pretended Highneſs, Cromwell the Wicked, &c. 12o, 1661. p. 20, 21. Re-printed in his Works. \*\*\* Cox his Hiſt. of Ireland.



Thus much for the Topics and Arguments arising from those Examples and Authorities, which have occurred, as most observable, upon this sudden Recollection, to illustrate my present Subject. What remains to be said of *Pamphlets*, will more especially regard the present Undertaking, to make a select Revival of them. The Approbation whereof may be grounded on these Considerations.

*First*, The Regard we owe to the Preservation of Good Writings in general, and to their Separation from the Bad: But more in particular to these. For, if the Re-printing of good old *Books* is commendable, much more is that of good old *Pamphlets*; they being, not to mention the greater Ease of the Expence, really more in Want of such Justice, to remove that mean Opinion which some, unread therein, have more indistinctly entertained of them *all*, because *many* indeed are but meanly written; tho' the Proportion is not greater than in *Books*: And for those *Pamphlets* which really are *well* written (as abundance sufficient for any such Undertaking have been, by the ablest Pens, upon the most emergent Points, however they daily perish in the common Wreck, for Want of a helping Hand) they cannot be denied a just Claim to this Care.

*Secondly*; Because they stand in greater Need of such Care, than Writings better secured by their Bulk and Bindings do. Many good old Family-Books are descended to us, whose Backs and Sides our careful Grand-fires Buff'd, and Bos'd, and Boarded against the Teeth of Time, or more devouring Ignorance, and whose Leaves they guarded with *Brass*, nay, *Silver* Clasps, against the Assaults of Worm and Weather: But these defenseless Conduits of Advertisement are so much more obnoxious, by reason of their Nakedness and Debility, to all destructive Casualties, that it is more rare and difficult, for Want of a proper *Asylum*, to meet with some *Tracts* which have not been Printed Ten Years, than with many *Books* which are more than ten Times their Age.

*Thirdly*; As being the liveliest Pictures of their Times. *Pamphlets* having this considerable Advantage, that springing usually from some immediate Occasion, they are copied more directly from the Life; so likelier to bear a Resemblance, than any more extended Draughts taken by a remoter Light. But being therefore a Kind of Reading *à la Mode*, and the Events, their Sources, so suddenly giving Way to every fresh Current of Affairs, it is no Wonder if these little Maps of them are, in like Manner, over-borne, and become as transient as they: And yet whenever the Political Wheel rolls into any of its former Tracks, or present Occurrences tally with those of past Times, doubtless what was *then* advanced for the Public Good, might *now* be conducive thereto: Whereas the Disorders of former Times revive, and the Remedies which were prescribed against them are to seek; many, as well pleasant as profitable, being lost merely for Want of Revival.

*Fourthly*; The truest Images of their Authors: For, *Pamphlets* running so often upon new, particular, and unprecedented Subjects, the Writers have less Opportunity to *commit*, and their Writings are less liable to *admit* such foul and frequent Practises of *Plagiarism*, as *Books* of Matter more Various, and Bulk more Voluminous, too often exhibit. Besides, the Author being more vigorously prompted to Application, by the Expediency of bringing forth his Work opportunely "is urged (as has been elsewhere said upon another Occasion\*) to strike out the Images of his Mind "at a Heat, in the most natural Form and Symmetry, in the most significant Circumstances at once; seldom allowing Leisure for the Writer to doat upon, or "dream over his Work: neither to disguise it with the Conceptions of other Men, "nor to deform it with Chimeras of his own". Hence are they preferred by many

( a )

Critics,

\* *Essay on Epistolary Writings*, &c. 8vo, M. S.

Critics, to discover the genuine Abilities of an Author, before his more dilatory and accumulated Productions.

These, besides many other Arguments which might be deduced from the commodious Brevity, the vast Choice, nor Variety of well-written *Pamphlets*, more particularly their regretted Dispersion, Consumption and Obscurity; but, above all, the many surprising Scenes to be unfolded, and brought in View, by select and public Collections, from the rich but disregarded Store, are, in my Opinion, sufficient Recommendations to the Encouragement of such a Revival. What few Attempts have hitherto been made, seem either of a short-sighted Nature, or of one too unbounded. Thus *Edward Husband*, circumscribes himself to the Speeches and Ordinances of Parliament, in a few Years of K. *Charles I.* As the Collections in K. *Charles II.* and K. *William's* Reigns, contain only some *State-Tracts* of those Times. And, for *John Danton's* Collection, it might have succeeded better, had he not been for rambling into foreign, or heavy and unaffecting Subjects. But the Undertaking most likely to succeed, is one wholly unconfined, as to Time, and only confined to Matter domestically applicable; provided the Undertaker chuses judiciously his Materials. And, certainly, the Public might soon be obliged with a very valuable Collection, if in those Particulars whereof the Collector's own Store should be deficient, he were supplied by such Possessors of these Curiosities, as have a Relish for the Project: Which may be farther rendered a convenient Receptacle for the Restoration of what is not only rare and remarkable, but pertinent and seasonable.

And such, among others, are the Advantages promised us by the present *PHOENIX*; which, if it ever grows into a Volume, and is accommodated with a compleat *Index*, I cannot help fancying, we shall imagine ourselves led into new and untrodden Paths; into Regions of neglected but notable Intelligence, which, having lain long dormant, and widely remote from ordinary Observation, will look like a sudden Resurrection of Characters and Descriptions, Schemes and Discoveries; or rather a Kind of Re-Creation of them in the Land of *Literature*: So that it may yield the best Comment upon past Times, and become the grand Expofitor of many Incidents, which General Historians are either wholly ignorant of, or very superficially mention.

Thus, my LORD, you have the free, but undigested *Thoughts* of one totally disinterested in the Undertaking aforesaid, and no otherwise concerned for the same, than as a Well-wisher to what I cannot but think may be of public Utility: And the juster Title they may have to your favourable Censure, as being the immediate Consequence of your Commands. I might, indeed, have farther enlarged on a Theme so fruitful; but in handling the Subject of *Pamphlets*, it may not be discommendable to conform my self to their Size: For,

*Inter Pygmæos non pudet esse brevem.*

More especially when I consider, that I may have already trespassed farther upon your Lordship's Patience, than will admit of an Apology from

11. 7. 49

Your LORDSHIP's, &c.

W. Oldys.